

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to ask all Democrats and Republicans to sign the campaign finance reform discharge petition. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because there is no issue more important to the future of this country than this particular issue.

I ask Members to ask themselves why it seems that Congress can never get anything done. I ask Members to ask themselves why Congress cannot pass health care reform legislation, child safety legislation, or the many other pressing issues facing this country. Ask why that supplemental funding bill this week was filled with pork barrel spending, rather than dealing with national priorities like education.

A good part of the answer is the way we fund campaigns in this country, the influence of special interests. We passed this bill, we debated it last year. We can pass it again now. We do not need to wait so that it gets tied up in budget negotiations or in politics of next year's elections. We can pass it for the American people today.

#### THE HISTORY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the vacuous bleatings of my esteemed colleagues on the liberal side of the aisle who invoke campaign finance reform as their latest slogan.

How truly audacious for the very people who created the current campaign finance reform to now self-righteously proclaim their outrage at the way the government makes crooks out of the truly honest people among us.

Just what is it about the liberal mindset that allows them to avoid responsibility for so many of their bad ideas and failed initiatives?

Consider the history of campaign finance. The liberals imposed absurdly low limits on the participation of Americans in the political process. It is truly amazing how this has resulted in things that were entirely predictable.

What happened? Politicians were then forced to spend almost all their time raising money, and of course money then found other ways into the political process through soft money, through issue advocacy, and, dare I mention, through the Chinese Communist friends of the White House. And of course this money, unlike direct contributions, lacks full disclosure, which is an invitation to corruption.

Why are Democrats not talking about that?

#### URGING COSPONSORSHIP OF THE BORDER PATROL RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to urge my colleagues to cosponsor a bill that the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and I are introducing today, the Border Control Recruitment and Retention Act.

This bill will correct a longstanding problem within the INS, and begins to address some of the recruitment and retention problems we have heard so much about lately. This bill is not a cure-all. It is, however, a step in the right direction.

I will continue to work with my colleagues on legislation for comprehensive pay reform for the United States Border Patrol. Currently most Border Patrol agents are kept at the GS-9 Journeyman level, with only 30 percent of the work force actually working at GS-11, even though their work is much more comprehensive.

The bill we are introducing today states that any GS-9 with a current rating of fully successful will automatically qualify for GS-11. What does this mean? It means that on the average, Border Patrol agents will move from a salary of about \$34,000 a year to a salary of about \$41,000. It addresses a pay disparity. It is fitting that we introduce this legislation today and push for its passage this year, which is the United States Border Patrol's 7th anniversary.

I believe that this is the least we can do for an agency that is at the front line of the defense for this country.

#### TO FORMER DEMOCRAT RUDY BRADLEY, WELCOME TO THE GOP

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, there is a trend going on in America today that is not talked much about, particularly on that side, at least on the national level. It is a phenomenon of party switching, and it is party-switching going in one direction and one direction only, from Democrats to Republicans.

Over 390 elected Democrats have switched to the GOP since Clinton and Gore were elected in 1992. Well, the Republican Party would like to welcome the latest party-switcher, State Representative Rudy Bradley of St. Petersburg, Florida.

Rudy Bradley is the only black Republican in the 160-member Florida legislature, for now. Here we have a lifetime proud Democrat who has finally come to the conclusion that the Democratic Party simply does not reflect his values or the values of his constituents.

He is tired of the Democrats' constant demonizing those who disagree with them. He is tired of rhetoric that says one thing while governing as a tax and spend liberal. He is tired of the attacks on the traditional values that made America great to begin with.

Rudy, welcome to the GOP.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, every Member of Congress knows firsthand the control that money has over our electoral process, and what is worse, the American people know firsthand the control that money has over our electoral process.

The money spent on last November's election totaled \$1 billion. This is an outrageous sum that hurts our democracy and it hurts our constituents. If voters are disgusted and turned off by the excesses in campaign financing they will not vote, and make no mistake, voters are disgusted. They are turned off and they are not voting.

Our constituents deserve better. The American people deserve better. Let us ban soft money and stop the attack ads disguised as issue advocacy soft money pays for. Let us strengthen the Federal Election Commission and give it the teeth it needs to enforce campaign finance laws. This Congress must act to restore confidence and participation in our electoral system.

Last month my colleagues and I signed a discharge petition to demand that Congress take up the important issue of campaign finance reform. The very fact that as Members of Congress we must petition our government speaks volumes and is a testament to the control money has over our electoral process.

We must prove to our constituents that we are serious about real reform. We must make sure that our political system represents everyone, not just those that can afford it.

#### AMERICAN LAND SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 180 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 180

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 833) to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands and acquired lands owned by the United States, and to preserve State sovereignty and private property rights in non-Federal lands surrounding those public lands and acquired lands. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources. After general debate, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute